

ANCIENT ROME AND MODERN LONDON CONTRASTED.

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Modern Rome, says a recent writer, occupies a triangular space, each side of which is nearly two miles long; the ground upon which it is built covers about 1,000 acres, or one square mile and a half; its walls form a circuit of about 15 miles, and embrace an area of 3,000 acres. Other writers make its circumference, including all the sinuosities of the walls, but 13 miles. This space embraces the seven hills, or mounts, on which ancient Rome stood, the names of which are still retained. Three of these only are covered with buildings, and are only thinly inhabited, the Trans-tiberine district, including the Borgo, contains the rest of the inhabitants. The ancient city, with its enormous palaces, amphitheatres, temples, baths, and other public buildings and gardens, most probably filled in the whole extent within the walls. But although it is asserted that the city was then thrice the extent, including vast suburbs without the walls, there is no proof that there existed any other than country-seats of the great and wealthy, who in the most palmy state of Rome were few in number. Modern Rome contains 54 parishes and 300 churches, 114 convents and monasteries, 335 noblemen's houses, 872 elementary schools, and in 1836 its population consisted of 153,678 souls. There are a great many villas in the immediate vicinity, and even within the walls.

That ancient Rome could not have occupied more space than the boundaries of the present city, is evidenced by numerous historical facts. Augustus Caesar had two cohorts of soldiers posted in the Trans-tiberine region, which was then one of the suburbs of Rome, whose duty it was to put out fires, and suppress tumults; this region was connected with Rome as Southwark and Westminster are with London. Publius Victor gives it 423 streets. Pliny tells us that, in the time of the emperor Trajan, it consisted of 213 streets. Donatus says the walls of Aurelian were the same in compass as in his days. Olympiodorus observes that it was measured in the time of Honorius, 150 years after Aurelian, and that the city had been preserved in its extent and beauty. Victor remarks that every one of the fourteen regions, into which it was divided, being measured and taken apart, its whole compass did not make up 43 miles.

Seneca, Lucan, Aristides, and others speak of numerous country-houses in the suburbs, "*Innumera nobilium villæ intra mœnia erant, quæ suburbanæ vocabantur*," which seems to prove that the suburbs were walled about as well as the Trans-tiberine region, which was considered as suburban. Pliny, when he speaks of 213 streets, says, "We have seen the whole city surrounded by the houses of Caius and Nero, and even, that nothing might be wanting, the fine palace of the latter was of gold, or gilded over."

The streets of ancient Rome were always narrow and inconvenient, after the fashion of Oriental countries; even the Appian and Flaminian Ways were only broad enough for two vehicles to go abreast. The houses of the lower orders were exceedingly mean and poor, and seldom more than one story high, and the temples, theatres, and many of the domus or noble residences were built of wood when Augustus assumed the purple; he improved and rebuilt a great portion of the city, and added many splendid edifices to it, but in this and during the succeeding reigns the streets were still continued narrow and inconvenient, and the chief of the two largest, viz. Flaminia or Triumphalis, was not more than eight or nine feet broad, and not long within the city; yet it was in this street, Martial tells us, all Rome assembled on a day of triumph. Murdini tells us, after Donatus and Publius, that there were not above 42,000 or 46,000 houses, and that they were but one story high, the people lodging on the ground, and that the houses were extraordinarily mean. Lipsius also, who has so grossly exaggerated the grandeur and extent of Rome, reckons only 46,000 houses; among these were 1,700 or 1,800 domus or palaces for the senators and wealthy citizens

of rank, the rest being insulae, and were inhabited by the common people.

After the conflagration in Nero's time, Tacitus tells us "The streets were made regular and wide, the height of the houses limited, with areas and porticos in front, nor was timber used in their exterior parts, but stone only. Public reservoirs of water were provided in various places, and persons to assist in extinguishing fires appointed, and every edifice had its distinct party walls. These regulations, though dictated by utility, did not fail to give beauty also to the new city." From this we may conjecture that, previous to the conflagration, it was somewhat similar to London in olden times, the major part of the city consisting of mean, narrow streets and wooden tenements; and this is demonstrated by the then general destruction, the greater portion of the city having fallen a prey to the flames.

The Romans had few of the elements of wealth which we possess: divided into two classes, freemen and slaves, rich and poor, their nobility were wretchedly poor when put in comparison with the rank and wealth of the City of London. Their boasted temples, palaces, amphitheatres, and baths, their aqueducts and other public works, evidence the debased and prostrate condition of the common people and the effects of successful war, which gave them slaves beyond count. Merchants, traders, and shopkeepers were held in no estimation, for the Romans were not a commercial people, nor had they any but woollen manufactures and a little linen. Architecture and sculpture were encouraged as administering to luxury, and not from a refined love of the arts, and the few trades followed to any extent were chiefly carving, joinery, gilding, goldsmiths', jewellers', and blacksmiths' works, and trades connected with their games and amusements and the army; also those of tailors, shoemakers, violinists, carpenters, fishermen, masons, cartwrights, and shipwrights, and linen and woollen weavers. Their chief source of wealth was war; from the foundation of the empire to the final close of its career, they could scarcely boast an interval of peace within themselves or with other nations; fortune favoured them on most occasions, and every victory contributed to increase their riches, and gave them, from the multitude of slaves taken in battle, a constant accession of wealth and a profitable investment for their capital. War supplied them with slaves to cultivate the soil in the absence of the citizen-soldiers; thus the demoralizing effects of war were unfelt by the citizens, who also participated in the advantages of every great victory, which threw such multitudes of slaves upon the market, that the meanest citizen, if so inclined, might purchase one or more of those human machines from whose industry they expected to extract wealth. Lipsius affirms there were no less than three or four millions of servants or slaves; and Vossius says there were more servants in Rome than there are inhabitants in any kingdom on earth, and no less than fourteen millions of inhabitants of all sorts; but this can only apply to the whole Roman territory, and not to the capital; and even then it is questionable whether the country, depending almost solely upon its own internal agricultural resources, was sufficiently fertile to supply such a population.

It is utterly impossible to reconcile in our minds the weak, insulated position of the Romans at the breaking out of the first Punic War, and the powerful fleets and armies brought forward during the twenty-three or twenty-four years of its continuance. Polybius, who is considered the most correct of Roman historians, tells us, that previous to the breaking out of that war the Romans had no ships either for war or commerce, and that a navy was created for the purpose of combating the Carthaginians. We are then told that under the conduct of Marcus Attilius Regulus and L. Manlius, they had a fleet of 350 ships, *naves longæ trirèmes, quadriremes, and quinqueremes* (vessels exceeding one another by one bank of oars), but even the exact nature and uses of these vessels are uncertain; that each galley had 300 rowers and 120 soldiers, the whole fleet consisting of 140,000 fighting men, and provided with the necessary munitions of war for land and sea. How are we to reconcile this with the knowledge of seamanship we at present possess? The

Mediterranean is no fish-pond, nor is an army of this extent a trifling one to be cruising about in open galleys; to each vessel must be attached many days' provision and water; the military engines were also very heavy and cumbersome. The dimensions of each galley must have been large enough to admit each man to have fighting room, and to have admitted the upper rowers to have full sweep between the lower ones, and the platform above must have had ample accommodation for 120 soldiers and their warlike implements. Again, if the Romans during the Punic War had attained to so great excellence in the naval art, how is it that this naval superiority was not maintained in the after periods of Roman grandeur? that the Romans in Polybius's time, when they were arrived at almost universal empire, could not fit out such fleets, and make such naval preparation? To this we have no answer, simply because no satisfactory answer can be given! The whole account is grossly exaggerated, and no doubt much of it fabulous.

Wherever memorials exist, we find the like exaggeration. When speaking of population, victories, and defeat, Polybius tells us, that in the time of the consuls M. Valerius Messala and L. Apustius Fullo, the force landed by the Romans to oppose the Gauls amounted to near 700,000 foot and 7,000 horse; and Polybius, on the occasion of the muster, expresses his admiration of the hardy enterprise of Hannibal to attack an empire of such prodigious strength with an army of scarcely 20,000 men; and how much more is this admiration increased when we find it reported to the Carthaginian senate that, in the course of his progress up to the conclusion of the battle of Cannæ, he had defeated six consular armies, slain 200,000 men, and taken 50,000 prisoners, 50,000 having also fallen at the battle of Cannæ!

(To be continued.)

HARWICH RAILWAY AND PIER.

It will be interesting to know that the project for improving the harbour of Gloucester, and making it available for the purposes of the intended communication, is likely to be met by a corresponding effort on the part of the government with respect to the port of Harwich.—The report of Captain Washington is now before us, from which we learn that the present difficulties in the navigation are easily removable, and that a very moderate outlay will suffice to render Harwich available for every purpose which its geographical situation suggests; and we may speedily hope to see Harwich harbour once more "the only real Harbour of Refuge on the east coast of England, between the Thames and the Humber," as well as the "best point for steam communication with Holland, Hamburg, and the North of Europe."—The method proposed by Captain Washington is based on the proposal of the Eastern Counties Railway Company to give 30,000l. towards the construction of a pier, on the plan proposed by Mr. Rendel. This, with the breakwater as suggested, will not only afford a perfect shelter to vessels under stress of weather, but would also entirely protect the Government property, which is greatly jeopardised by the present state of the harbour. The plan, as laid down by Captain Washington, is extremely simple, and is comprised under the three following heads:—"1. To put an immediate stop to the quarrying up and carrying away the cement stone from the foot of Beacon Cliff.—2. To replace, by an economical breakwater of rough stone, run out from Beacon Cliff, the natural barrier that has been taken away, so as to confine and guide the ebb tide against Landguard Point, and thus stop its increase.—3. To dredge a 15-foot channel (or if preferred, an 18-foot channel) in lieu of the former deep-water passage now lost."—These suggestions being carried into effect, the port of Harwich will present a perfect shelter, with a channel of 15 feet deep throughout a quarter of a mile along the whole length of the Suffolk shore. This will enable "large steamers at all times of the tide, frigates at a quarter flood, and the largest ships of the North Sea fleet at high water to enter the harbour by night as well as by day."—*Railway Times.*